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6.0 LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

6.1 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

The State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2 (c), require that an EIR consider and discuss significant irreversible changes that would be caused by implementation of the proposed project to ensure that such changes are justified. The Guidelines specify that the use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project should be discussed because a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as a highway improvement that provides access to a previously inaccessible area) should also be discussed because such changes generally commit future generations to similar uses. Finally, irreversible damage can also result from environmental accidents associated with the project and should be discussed.

Construction of the proposed project will result in a commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources. Such resources may include certain types of lumber and other forest products; raw materials such as steel; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt such as sand and stone; water; petrochemical construction materials such as plastic; and petroleum-based construction materials. In addition, fossil fuels used by construction will also be consumed. Project construction will also result in an increased commitment of public maintenance services such as waste disposal and treatment.

Similarly, operation of the proposed project will result in the commitment of limited, nonrenewable resources and slowly renewable resources such as natural gas, electricity, petroleum-based fuels, fossil fuels, and water. Natural gas and electricity will be used for lighting, heating and cooling of buildings, heating and refrigeration for food preparation and storage, and operation of project facilities. As stated in Section 4.6, Public Services and Utilities, the project is expected to result in an annual electricity demand of 2,389 MWh and demand for 132,400 cubic feet of natural gas per month. Although this represents an increase in demand for both resources when compared to existing project site conditions, the increases are within the existing delivery capacity of service providers. The project will not result in a significant impact related to either the provision of natural gas or electricity. In addition, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations requires conservation practices that will limit the amount of energy consumed by the proposed project. Compliance with Title 24 is mandated by State law and referenced in Mitigation Measure 4.8.9. Nevertheless, the use of such resources will continue to represent a long-term commitment of essentially nonrenewable resources.

The project site also requires an increase in potable and reclaimed water. The total average daily project demand for potable water is estimated to be 22,935 gallons per day. Demand for reclaimed water is expected to be approximately 109 acre-feet per year. Sufficient water supplies are available to service the project, and project impacts are less than significant. However, the increase in water use will continue to represent a long-term commitment of this essentially nonrenewable resource.

Once developed, the proposed project will have indefinitely altered the characteristics of the project site from one characterized by ongoing oil extraction and petroleum activities, retail/commercial

tenants, and nonnative vegetation to one characterized by a variety impervious surfaces and sports fields. On-site surface water drainage in the developed condition will be similar to the existing condition, as described in Section 4.4, Hydrology and Water Quality. Mitigation measures are required to ensure that project hydrology will meet drainage system standards and that pollutants of concern will be controlled through implementation of structural and nonstructural BMPs. Site topography will be modified per the conceptual grading plan for the project site, and topographic features of the project site, including Exxon Hill, will be altered. Views from the surrounding areas will continue to be available after project implementation although views from the site and of the site will be permanently changed. The visual change from existing conditions to project conditions is not significant given that the site is an in-fill development surrounding by industrial and commercial uses.

The proposed project will result in the loss of the historic compressor structure located on the site and will contribute to the cumulative loss of historical resources in the region, particularly resources associated with the oil industry. Although mitigation is required to reduce the project's impacts on historic resources, this impact remains significant and irreversible. The proposed project would also result in a significant irreversible change to the availability of habitat for the loggerhead shrike. While the planting of native habitat on the southwestern portion of the site, as required by project mitigation, will provide some habitat for the loggerhead shrike in association with potential foraging habitat in the cemetery, continued breeding by this species may not occur. Therefore, the loss of breeding territory for the loggerhead shrike may not be fully mitigated and would result in a contribution to significant cumulative impacts

Operation of the proposed project would result in an increase in traffic to and from the project site. As discussed in the traffic analysis in Section 4.9, Traffic and Circulation, the significant traffic impacts of the proposed project can be mitigated through implementation of recommended mitigation measures. The proposed project would also generate air emissions from both mobile and stationary sources during construction and operation. Although project-related traffic would not significantly affect local CO levels, short-term construction emissions are expected to exceed the SCAQMD criteria pollutant thresholds for NO_X and PM_{10}. While the implementation of mitigation will further reduce these emissions, they remain above the threshold levels and are significant even after mitigation. On Saturdays only, long-term operational emissions associated with the proposed project are also projected to exceed the SCAQMD criteria pollutant thresholds for CO and NO_X. Mitigation does not reduce these impacts to below a level of significance, and the impacts remain significant after mitigation.

The proposed project will redevelop approximately 55 acres of land currently designated for industrial development in the adopted City of Long Beach General Plan. The proposed project is of comparable or less intensity than the current site designation. Therefore, the emissions associated with occupation and use of the project are not expected to violate any SCAQMD standards or contribute to air quality deterioration beyond current SCAQMD projections.

As discussed in Section 4.13, Public Health and Safety, with mitigation, the proposed project does not pose a health risk as a result of soil contamination or any other health and safety hazards. Since the proposed project does not include uses that would generate or use substantial amounts of hazardous waste, and since construction activities or site operation will not cause additional short-term or long-term health risks (after implementation of the measures identified in this section), the project does not contribute to potential long-term public health and safety impacts. In addition, implementation of oil

well fire safety measures to the satisfaction of the Fire Chief and in accordance with the California Fire Code will reduce fire safety risks to below a level of significance.

The commitment of limited, slowly renewable and nonrenewable resources required for the construction and operation of the Sports Park project will limit the availability of these resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project. However, continued use of such resources is consistent with regional and local plans and projected growth in the area. No other significant irreversible changes are expected to occur as a result of project implementation.

6.2 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126 (d) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR analyze growth-inducing impacts and states that an EIR should discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Impacts associated with the removal of obstacles to growth as well as the development of facilities that encourage and facilitate growth are considered to be growth inducing. However, the CEQA Guidelines also state that it is not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

The proposed project will result in the redevelopment of a 55-acre site zoned for industrial and institutional uses. All utilities and public services currently serve the project site; the project will not remove obstacles to growth in a previously undeveloped area.

The redesignation of the site for project implementation will result in the loss of approximately 55 acres from the City's inventory of potential industrial sites. The net loss in industrially zoned land may reduce the City's ability to attract industry and associated employment opportunities to Long Beach. The potential for the proposed project to generate additional growth in the City of Long Beach is unlikely because the proposed development is intended to primarily serve Long Beach residents and visitors from surrounding areas. The employment potential of the proposed project is not of a magnitude that would cause significant numbers of people to relocate to the area solely for the purposes of being close to the proposed project site. Based on these considerations, the proposed project would not induce population growth in the community.

Although the proposed project is consistent with City policies that promote managed growth and in-fill development and increased recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities, it does not foster economic growth to the same extent that industrial development would. As previously stated, the project is intended to primarily serve Long Beach residents and may support the growth of tourism on a limited basis since the golf center and the pay-for-play Sports Park may also serve as visitor attractions for tournaments and other special events. However, these events do not represent significant opportunities for sustained economic growth. Implementation of the proposed project will result in an increase in recreation area and opportunities in the City, but will not result in economic growth that exceeds levels anticipated in plans adopted by the City of Long Beach or the Southern California Association of Governments.

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